March 25, 2014

FACT SHEET: Enhancing the Security of the Maritime Supply Chain Gift Basket

This Gift Basket builds on the discussions that occurred at the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit, focuses on the maritime smuggling pathway, and encourages partner countries to increase their involvement in securing this vital pathway. Increased transport opportunities by land, sea, and air necessitate the importance of every country's participation in strengthening its own role in the prevention, detection, and deterrence of nuclear trafficking by bolstering radiation detection capacity.

- States joining this Gift Basket seek to maintain effective radiation detection systems and response procedures at their large container seaports, and to help other States in developing their own radiation detection capabilities at their own seaports.

- This Gift Basket also calls for an international workshop, by 2016, on sharing experiences and exploring best practices in detecting and removing from the global maritime supply chain all nuclear and radiological materials out of regulatory control.

- To date, the United States has worked with partner countries to build their capacities to detect, deter, and interdict the illicit trafficking of dangerous nuclear and radiological materials (i.e. highly enriched uranium, plutonium, cesium, etc.) that could be used in a nuclear device or a radiological dispersal device (RDD) at over 500 sites and ports.

- Additionally, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the European Union, and multiple countries around the world are working to equip their own seaports and other border sites with radiation detection systems.

- Installed radiation detection systems have been responsible for the detection of various nuclear and radiological materials out of regulatory control, such as Georgia and Moldova. In several instances, these systems have been involved in the detection of the smuggling of nuclear materials that could be used for a weapon or RDD. These cases help to underscore the importance of radiation detection systems at key international checkpoints.